



Susan Bysiewicz
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
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**TESTIMONY OF SECRETARY OF THE STATE
SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
March 12, 2010**

Good Morning Chairperson Slossberg, Chairman Spallone, ranking members and other distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. For the record, my name is Susan Bysiewicz, and I am the Secretary of the State. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you.

**H.B. No. 5441: AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN REVISIONS TO
ELECTIONS RELATED STATUTES**

I worked closely with the Registrars of Voters Association on this proposal and it jointly incorporates our ideas. This bill makes technical changes to Connecticut's election laws to make adjustments to the election calendar to accommodate the new optical scan voting machines, eliminates the need to print extra copies of voter's lists and instead allows them to be kept in electronic format, allows provisional ballots to apply to all elections and offices, adjusts the absentee ballot counting timeframes because of the more efficient counting of the new optical scan voting machines and eliminates challenge ballots because provisional would now apply to all offices. In addition, this bill codifies in statute a number of voter privacy issues that concern the new technology which currently reside in regulation. These concerns include mandating that a privacy sleeve be available with a paper ballot.

**S.B. No. 389: AN ACT CONCERNING TECHNICAL CHANGES TO ELECTION
LAWS**

This bill makes technical changes to Connecticut's election laws to remove obsolete references to lever voting machines and to make other technology neutral changes to the election laws so our laws will accommodate the use of new voting technology currently and in the future.

S.B. No. 363: AN ACT CONCERNING POLLING PLACES FOR PRIMARIES

This bill allows Registrars of Voters to change the number of polling places used for a primary from those used for an election. The polling places chosen must be designated 90 days before the primary and notice must be sent to each elector whose polling place will be different 30 days before the primary. The thought of reducing the number of polling places for a primary is often popular because of its potential as a cost saving mechanism. Such fiscal concerns, however, must be balanced against the very real concerns of confusing voters who will ordinarily expect to vote at the same place that

they have traditionally. This bill strikes a good balance between the opportunity for fiscal savings and avoiding voter confusion through explicit notice.

H.B. No. 5442: AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING BY MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY AND CITIZENS LIVING ABROAD

This bill makes necessary changes to our Connecticut Election Laws to accommodate recent changes made to federal military voting laws in the MOVE Act. It has become increasingly difficult for our Connecticut military voters to cast ballots in a timely manner because of sporadic mail service in our various military zones overseas. Most importantly, the MOVE Act requires that each state allow military citizens to apply for and receive absentee ballots electronically from our municipal clerks. Currently, Connecticut law allows our municipal clerks to issue absentee ballots to a voter in-person or by mail only. By allowing at least part of the absentee ballot process to be completed by electronic means will save our military vital days in the process and dramatically increase the chances that they will be able to cast their ballots on time. Like many states, we are constantly concerned about voting security. To effectively balance this concern with the desire to allow all Connecticut citizens the opportunity to cast their ballots, the completed ballot must still be returned by regular mail and must be accompanied by a sworn affidavit much like the affidavit a regular absentee ballot voter would sign when returning their ballot in a standard envelope provided by the municipal clerk.

I would also like to state my support for the following bill:

H.B. No. 5428: AN ACT CONCERNING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE ELECTION ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION, THE INTEGRITY OF ELECTIONS AND REVISIONS TO THE CITIZENS' ELECTION PROGRAM

This bill includes important provisions that will allow Election's Enforcement to enforce the regulations of our office.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and look forward to working with the committee on this and other important election related issues.